

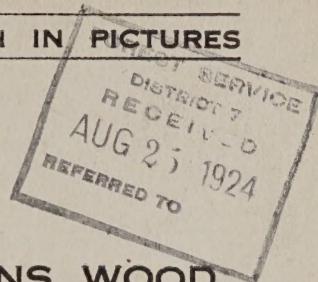
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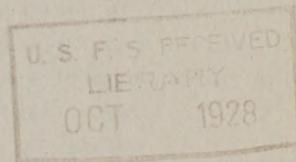
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FOREST PRODUCTS RESEARCH IN PICTURES

NO. 45



HOW DECAY WEAKENS WOOD



**FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY
U. S. FOREST SERVICE
MADISON, WISCONSIN**

Rotting of wood is caused only by fungi.

The up-and-down lines in this enlargement of southern yellow pine are the walls of the wood fibers and the twisting dark lines between are threads of a common wood-destroying fungus. The small irregular holes - the whitest spots in the picture - are punctures made in the cell walls by the food-seeking fungous threads. By attacking the cell walls fungi weaken wood until it crumbles away in the last stage of rot.

The Forest Products Laboratory of the U. S. Forest Service estimates that an annual saving of more than a billion and a half cubic feet of standing timber could be profitably made by protecting wood from fungi through the use of chemical wood preservatives and through better methods of storing and using wood.

*Photograph by Forest Products Laboratory,
U. S. Forest Service*



